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DEACON GRAB-ALL,
VS.
NATHAN BROWN;
OR,
THE WAR BETWEEN CAPITAL
AND LABOR ENDED.

A SERIO-COMIC DRAMA,
IN THREE ACTS.

By J. H. Curry, Esq.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1896, by
J. H. CURRY, ESQ.

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FORT MYERS, FLA.
ROSE & SELBY, PUBLISHERS,
1896 .

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Aug. 18. 1892. The day was very hot and
the wind was very strong.

CAST.

NATHAN BROWN,--A Poor Cobbler.

DEACON GRAB-ALL,--Barker and Manufacturer

COL. GOLDSMITH, --Capitalist and Manufacturer.

SQUIRE NEEDHAM,--Attorney for Grab-all. Goldsmith & Company.

JULIUS BROWN, --Only son of Nathan Brown

MR. JOHNSON,--Sheriff

EPHRAIM McDUGAL, --An Unfortunate Outcast--

MARY BROWN,--Wife of Nathan Brown

NORA BROWN, -- Daughter of Nathan Brown

MAGGIE GRABALL, --Daughter of Deacon Grab-all.

TILLY MALLOY, --An Irish Servant.

*Foreman of Graball, Goldsmith
& Co.s, factory.*

DEACON GRAB-ALL,

VS.

NATHAN BROWN.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

(Nathan Brown, the Cobbler, in his shop, mending shoes.)

Brown.

“Well, here it is again; Mary is dead bent on sending Julius to College. How the dneece she will manage it, gets ahead of me, but women are mighty determined creatures when they take a notion to do anything. Yes, Mary is mighty proud too; she’s got blue blood in her veins, always talking about position, society and so on. Well, she can’t help it, for she came from awful stuck-up stock; and how she ever got stuck on a poor impecunious cuss like me, always has been a conundrum, but God bless her, she is a darling and has never gone back on her choice.

(Enter Mary Brown with a letter in her hand.)

Mary B.

"Nathan, what do you reckon, I received a letter from Brother John today, and he —

Brown.

"Nothing strange about that, you and John are always writing to each other about some fool scheme or other.

Mary B.

"But Nathan, wait until I tell you about it. He writes me that he wants Julius to come to Boston and live with him, go to school and stay in his office and read law.

Brown.

"How in the thunder does he expect us to send Julius to Boston, when we hav'nt got money enough to live on a week ahead, say nothing of the debts we owe and can't pay?

Mary Brown.

"But Nathan, you wou't wait until I finish — he sends in this letter a check for one hundred dollars to fix Julius up and to pay his expenses to Boston. He says that when he comes he will bear all his expenses for four years. Oh! how good brother John is.

Brown :

"But Mary this is a reflection on your husband. You know, I have never yet asked one of your blue-blooded, rich relations to help me one cent, and I never shall, as long as I can drive a peg.
(*Excitedly strikes his last with hammer*).

Mary B. :

"No, no, Nathan. You don't understand brother John; he never meant any reflection at all; you know John never did object to you, he was always your friend. He just means to do us a kind-

ness. And he has no family, being an old bachelor, and he wants Julius for company too

Brown :

"Ah, Yes you know how to fix it up; I admit that John is the best one of the whole lot of your kinfolks, I mean not to include the feminine portion of the family, for I never have anything to say reflecting on womankind. True enough, John was the only one who did not raise *purgatory* when I stole you from the affectionate embraces of your loving, devoted family, but--

Mary B :

"Now Nathan, I have never heard you before this, speak unkindly of my people, and you know I have been all that a wife could be to you

Brown :

"Yes, Mary, that is so, forgive me, I never meant anything to hurt you; but darling, do you know we are hopelessly in debt, and that in fact old Deacon Grab-all owns everything I've got? Why, no longer than this morning, I went to Squire Needhams' law office and gave a bill-of-sale, besides that infernal mortgage, to all our little personal effects. He has a claim now on the old gray mare, both cows, the pigs, and blast me, he would have put you and Julius in the bunch, if he could have sold you for fifteen cents a piece. And the idea of sending Julius off to Boston to go to College, in the fix we are, is absurdly ridiculous.

(Mary Brown weeps).

(Enter Julius).

Julius B.

"Why, mother, what is the matter?"

Mary B.

"Julius, my boy, I have just received a letter from your Uncle John at Boston, and

Julius B.

"Does a letter from Uncle John make you cry?"

Mary B.

"That is not it, he sent me one hundred dollars

Julius B.

"And this makes you cry? Suppose he had sent a thousand; guess you would have died on the spot.

Mary B.

"Oh, Julius, you wont wait until I explain; he wants you to come to Boston, go to college, live with him, stay in his office and be a lawyer and——

Julius B.

"Must think I am a *stunner*.

Mary B.

"But, Julius, your father thinks we are too poor; and we are so much in debt. He thinks you ought to stay and help him in the shop.

Brown.

"Now Mary, I never said a word about Julius' working in the shop.

Julius B:

"I think father is about right. The idea of me trotting off to Boston and leave you and father and sister ~~7~~ Nora, here, living and working like slaves in your poverty, th at wou^d do mother.

Mary B.

"But, Julius, your Uncle is to bear all expenses; he sent this hundred dollars for that purpose.

Julius B:

"Then, Mother, as Uncle John is so gracious, just let him lend me the hundred dollars, and I will pay old Deacon Grab-all his debt, and stay here and help father in the shop and pay back Uncle John in a year or two.

Mary B:

"But, Julius, your Uncle wants you to be educated, fitted to succeed in life, to take a position in society; he is ambitious, and proud of you; it is so good in him to do this.

Brown:

"Yes, Julius, your Mother and Uncle John are right. I don't want you to be as I am, a veritable slave all your life. The smell of leather is a very obnoxious odor to the delicate olfactories of these *quality* folks; and you might not be as lucky as your old daddy was in getting a blue-blooded girl for a wife, with the dirt and dust of manual labor, and the smell of the shop on your clothes.

Mary B:

"Now, Nathan, it is not that at all; you are just as good and

noble as Deacon Grab-all, Colonel Goldsmith or anybody else, but then you know —

Julius B:

"That the old Deacon has got a mighty charming daughter, and mother has a charming son. This daughter might not appreciate the delicious aroma of cow-hides, goat-skins, tan-yards and so forth, ha! ha!

Brown:

"This does settle it; Julius, you are going to Boston, and they can make leather out of my old hide if you don't stay there and get fixed up for a gentleman. I will work my nails off if necessary, and support this domestic institution and pay off old Deacon Grab-all besides. I mean with Mary's help, for she is a sorter of a saving clause in our domestic economy and never does know when she is tired.

Julius B:

"No, father, this is not right; I had rather stay here and help you out of your trouble. I am not ashamed of our trade. The best man that ever lived on earth was a carpenter. The smell of the shop on the garments of an honest man is as sweet as holy incense that goes up to heaven before the altar, and the dust-stained garments of the true toiler are as beautiful in heaven's sight as the stainless raiment of Celestial light that enrobes the angels.

Brown:

"Now, I know you are going to Boston. That speech does not

fit the mouth of a common cobbler; that's some of the outcroppings of that mother of yours. Boys always take after their mothers; all great men have great mothers.

Mary B:

"Nathan, you always turn everything into burlesque; you ought not to talk this way.

Brown:

"Well, old gal I mean it, give me a grip; Julius, get ready to start for Boston by to-morrow. Go and tell Nora about it, and fix up lively

(Exit Julius). (Brown caresses his wife). (Julius returns immediately).

Julius B:

"Father, Deacon Grab-all is before the door in his carriage and says he wants to see you.

Brown:

"Tell him to come in, I am too busy now to go into the street

(Exit Julius).

Mary B:

"Nathan, you are not busy, not doing anything.

Brown:

"Not doing anything? Don't call this loving and caressing a wife doing anything? You used to think it was something when we would steal out in the woods before we united our destinies.

Mary B:

"Nathan, you ought to be ashamed

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Brown:

"What! ashamed of kissing you? Why, you used to be the one that looked mighty shamed; but there is the deacon. (*knocks.*)

Brown:

"Come in.

(*Enter Deacon Grab all.*)

Brown:

"Good morning, Deacon, will you have a seat on the stool.

Deacon Grab all.

"No thank you, sir; I came around to see about that little matter between us; have you seen Squire Needham, to-day?

Brown:

"O. Yes I went to the Squire's office this morning and signed some sort of a document as further security for what I owe you.

Deacon Grab all:

"I am glad you did. I shall see Squire Needham also about it. (*Begins to retire.*)

Brown: (*Introducing him to his wife.*)

"Deacon Grab-all this is my wife. (*They greet.*)

Mary B:

"I think I once had the pleasure of meeting you a good many years ago in Baltimore, when you were working for my father in the bank.

Deacon Grab-all:

"O, Yes. I recall with pleasure those days, and the memory of your father; and I have often thought strange how things often

happen so contrary to all our expectations

Mary B:

"Yes, life is made up of surprises; sometimes they are very grievous and disappointing, and often they are very agreeable and delightful.

Deacon Grab-all:

"True enough. I bid you good-day.

(Exit Deacon Grab-all).

Brown:

"Well, Mary, I'll shut up shop, and we will go home and get things in shape for Julius' departure, besides I don't feel like working any more to-day. We will spend the balance of our time, until our boy leaves, with the children. This may be the last day we all shall be together. And Mary, life is getting to be a mighty serious business with us poor people: I sometimes lose courage, when I see how the poor are oppressed by the rich.

Mary B:

"But, Nathan, you are too prone to look on the dark side, it will all come right in the end. The darkest time is just before the dawn, you know.

Brown:

"Then, it must be mighty near broad day-light by this time, but God bless you, darling; a true wife is the inspiration of a poor, cowardly cuss of a husband anyhow.

"Now for a forgetting of our sorrows and a hoping for brighter days; Mary, if you will sing one of your sweet songs of the

olden time it will penetrate my very gizzard and cheer me up immensely; what say you?

Mary B:

"Well, Nathan, you must help me and we will sing that little song you wrote for us when we left our home in Baltimore and came to Alabama and were married

(They sing the song as follows).

No tongue can express the emotion
I feel when I think of the time
We swore to each other devotion--
A constancy, true and sublime

CHORUS.

As pure as the stars up in heaven,
Our vows we then sealed with a kiss;
The angels were watching, and even
They shared in our Eden of bliss;
The angels forgave us, and even
They shared in our Eden of bliss

There came not a cloudlet at morning
To darken our beautiful sky:
The sun of our love at its dawning
We hailed with a rapturous cry (Chorus).

There crept in our hearts not a sorrow
Not even a shadow was cast;
Our hopes they were bright of to-morrow,
We dreamed that they ever would last (Chorus)

As rivers rush down to the sea,
And are lost beneath the dark wave,
So runneth in sorrow or glee,
Our lives to the pitiless grave (Chorus)

Exit Brown & Wife.
ACT I; SCENE II

(Nathan Brown's shop. Enter Julius).

Julius B:

"It's now nearly six o'clock and I haven't got any answer yet. I wonder if that fool Eph didn't get my note to Maggie. I certainly can depend on Eph.

(Eph comes up excitedly),

Eph:

"Well, you can, Mr. Julius, depend on Eph every time. *(Hands note to Julius)* Golly, I had a time of a getting that note. I fell over the wall right cawhalloping in the briar patch and lost about two yards of hide; and while I was a lying there I heard the old Deacon a coming, blowing like a porcupine. Golly, I thought he had me, and Maggie squatted down beside the wall jest like a little chick when a hawk squeals around.

Julius B:

"Bully for you, Eph. I'll send you something nice from Boston. *(Reads letter)*.

Eph:

What does the Gal say, Mr. Julius; is she coming?

Julius:

Never mind, you can go now. *(Exit Eph)* Yes, here is her note; "Depend on me; will be there by six o'clock, or pretty soon after, but I must be very careful, my conscience hurts me, anyhow; but as you are going off to Boston, perhaps forever, I will agree to the meeting. Maggie." Yes, I knew I could certainly depend on Maggie. But suppose her father should catch on to our racket, and I'm afraid he has, wouldn't he go for Maggie, and blow me up! But I must see her before I leave for Boston. Why don't she come! But hark, I hear her now. What music in the sound of her footsteps. Ha! ha! that is her sure. *(Enter Maggie. She and Julius greet each other)*. I knew you would come, my darling, give me one sweet kiss.

Maggie:

No, no, Julius, not that; it is not right; besides, I feel that I am doing wrong to secretly meet you here this way. A girl should never keep secrets from her parents. What would you think of your sister, Nora, stealing off like this to meet some gentleman friend?

Julius:

If Nora had a rich old daddy who wouldn't let her see her sweetheart just because he was poor, and her sweetheart was honorable, and loved her, I would vote against the old man and in favor of Nora. But we are not discussing Nora and her lover now.

Maggie:

Ah, yes, you see how it seems when others do as we are doing; but then, Julius, I hear that you are going to leave for Boston, and I have but a few moments to stay; I just came to tell you good-bye—we may never see each other again.

Julius:

Yes, Maggie, we shall see each other again, and this is why I wanted especially to see you now, to pledge anew and forever, my love for you, to swear again that not another girl shall ever have a place in my heart. And, Maggie, I want you to promise, let come what may, you will be true to me, and when you can, you will be my own, my darling wife.

Maggie:

Oh, Julius; but, Julius, this is not right.

Julius:

Maggie, don't you love me? Do you reject me simply because

I am the son of a poor cobbler, and you the daughter of a banker and a millionaire? I shall not always be poor, despised, impecunious.

Maggie:

Hush, Julius; You know it is not that. I could not think more of you if you had a hundred million; it is not money that makes the man. The truest wealth is honor, and he who possesses a noble, generous heart, is as high above the avaricious money lover as the stars are above the earth. Yes, Julius, I will promise to be faithful to my vows, and when you think the time has come that I can make you a — (He takes her hands affectionately and kisses them) But Julius I must go, it is getting late. My father will put me on the witness stand and cross-question about my absence, and he might get me rather excited.

Julius:

I ought to be there to defend you. I am going to be a lawyer myself. But, then, tell me before we part that nothing this side of heaven shall separate us here on earth?

Maggie:

I promise, Julius, and here in this locket you will find the pledge of my affection; but, good-bye. I thought I heard someone there. (Maggie runs off like a frolicking school-girl, and Julius retires rather melancholy).

(This meeting is observed by the old cobbler and his wife, unknown to Julius and Maggie).

ACT I; SCENE III.

(In Lawyer Needham's office. Squire Needham sitting at his desk, soliloquizing).

Squire Needham:

Well, I guess I have got the thing fixed up now, to suit the old Deacon, but none but the Lord or the devil can tell, for he is the toughest old codger for a client I have had to do with yet. How I hate to have to court and flatter the old villian; but its-business and a meat-and-bread question too. I am not astonished that the common run of folks are rather skeptical on the question of lawyers inheriting the first places in the kingdom. My conscience is cursing me now for persecuting poor old Brown; dogging the life out of him for the sake of a few dollars to rattle in the vaults of this old miser, who could afford to give Brown forty times this much and not miss it, but business is business. (*Knock on the door*). Come in

(*Nora enters*).

Needham:

Why, Miss Nora, glad to see you; it is not every day a lawyer's office is honored by such fair clients.

Nora:

But, Mr. Needham, I came to engage your services, not as my lawyer, but for brother Julius; he wants you to carry this note and package to Miss Maggie Grab-all.

Needham:

Ha! ha! I see: Julius and Miss Maggie are having a little romantic courtship on the sly, and they have selected me to help in

the scheme, have they?

Nora:

Yes, that is about the size of it, but it is ridiculous; the idea of Julius aspiring to win Miss Maggie; he, a poor cobbler's son; she, the only daughter of a great banker!

Needham:

Ah, Miss Nora, that makes no difference. Banker's daughter, cobbler's daughter, or anybody's daughter; she's mother Eve's daughter

Nora:

It may be that you do not know as much about the daughters of mother Eve as you do about your law business.

Needham:

That may be true, but I know that she is a woman, and has a woman's heart, and I know that you have, too. And, Miss Nora, I have been waiting a long time to tell you --

Nora:

Mr. Needham, what about brother Julius's message?

Needham:

I'll attend to that, but I have a message for *you*.

Nora:

I hear someone coming, I must go. Good morning.

(Exit Nora, hurriedly, leaving her handkerchief and a bunch of flowers on the desk, and Needham looking non-plussed).

(Knock on the door)

Needham:

Come in.

(Enter Deacon Grab-all).

Deacon Grab-all:

Good morning, Squire, how are you progressing with our little matter with neighbor Brown.

Needham:

I think, Deacon, I have got the papers fixed up according to Hoyle, and you can stick it to him whenever you want to.

Deacon Grab-all:

I don't think, Squire, that Hoyle is good authority in law; in fact, I don't like that expression anyway; it smacks of gaming, and you know that my position in society and the church, necessitates my strong disapprobation of anything tending to leading young men from the paths of morality and virtue; and I am extremely sorry to hear you use so glibly and familiarly such terms; it indicates a taste for, if not an indulgence in, the iniquitous habit of gaming. You know one of my rules is never to have a young man who ever smokes, chews tobacco, indulges in alcoholic stimulants, or plays at cards.

Needham:

Yes, Deacon, I am aware of your strict notions on this subject and have often heard your lectures at the church to the young people, but then there might be some things as bad, if not worse than a little indulgence now and then in a game of cards.

Deacon G:

No, sir; it is iniquitous, and I say again I am sorry to hear you talk as if you were familiar with such wickedness.

Needham:

All right then, Deacon, I apologize and say that the papers are fixed up according to due process of law, and I repeat, you can stick it to old Brown whenever you want to.

Deacon G :

I think I ought to go for this old rascal, he has been owing me this seventy-five dollars nigh onto two years.

Needham :

But, Deacon, you forget that Brown has paid you about fifteen dollars interest, and he has had very bad luck too, with sickness and Doctor's bills to pay, he has been put to it to make a living.

Deacon G :

Don't talk to me about bad luck and his being put to it; why, sir, he has actually sent that son of his to Boston, to College, using the money that justly belonged to me; it is outrageous, a shame.

Needham :

But, Deacon, I understand that it was some relative that sent his mother the money to pay the boy's expenses to College.

Deacon G :

It makes no difference, it is ridiculous; Brown ought to keep that boy at home to help him work to pay his debts. Sending him off to College, indeed! I never saw a College; I worked when I was a boy for five dollars a month and board. I never got an education but I made a living and was never a dependent pauper on the charities of friends. But, let me see the papers; did Brown sign them up cheerfully?

Needham :

Not so cheerfully, as resignedly; you know it is not such a cheerful performance for a fellow to sign away all he has. But then, he made no objection and said he desired to pay the debt as soon as possible.

Deacon G :

What do you call the paper he signed this time, Squire?

Needham :

It is a bill of sale, just as you told me to fix up, a surrender of all rights, title and interest whatsoever in the old gray mare, the Jersey cow and calf, two brindle steers, six head of swine, consisting of the mother, the brothers and sisters of the Berkshire breed

Deacon G:

All right; do you think the property is worth the debt?

Needham:

Worth the debt! Why, that Jersey cow alone is worth your claim, say nothing of the other cattle, the horse, hogs, etc.

Deacon G:

Now Squire, suppose you go and see Brown and explain to him that I have a legal right to his property, but that I dislike to press him, but that I am willing to compromise, if he will turn over to me the Jersey cow and calf, and the oxen and horse, I will not require the hogs. This will save too, the expense of a lawsuit.

Needham:

Mr. Grab-all, I prefer not to do this. I am willing to do the legitimate work of an attorney, but I can't go and look Brown in the face and persuade him to do this. The fact is, I feel like a criminal anyhow in getting him to sign this bill-of-sale. I think you ought to go yourself and see Brown; and perhaps, you and he might adjust matters mutually satisfactorily.

Deacon G:

Now, Squire Needham, you are a young man and have not established any legal reputation here yet, in our town, and you know you are dependent on getting business to make a living as well as a reputation: and you further know that I am able to throw more business in your way than any other man in town. So I think you should not be so quick to refuse my requests.

Needham:

But Deacon, you certainly would not desire me to do something I thought was not for your interest; and I am certain you could succeed better than I, with Brown. I must decline to go on this errand.

Deacon G:

Very well then, but remember my warning. Any how, bring suit at once. Replevy the property. I will claim all my legal rights.

(Exit Deacon).

Needham:

Oh my! How I wish I could afford to collar that old cuss and exodise him down the stairs. But then, the old coon does pay my rents and grocery bills. What a slave is a poor impecunious lawyer! What a tyranny he must endure! Here, I am forced to do this dirty business, but in a legal way, for that old white-washed Pharisee. But then the cards change sometimes, and we have a run of luck, ha! ha! and when a lawyer does get the advantage how he can use it; when he gets the grip on a fellow how he can squeeze, squeeze him; just wait, I can feel the old Deacon now oozing through my tender pressure; ha! ha! such is life, let the wheel turn; we will be on top after awhile.

(Enter Eph).

Eph:

Hello, Squire, what is the matter with you and Uncle Grab-all?

Needham:

How, is he your Uncle?

Eph:

He's mother's brother, so they say. After father died he run father's business until he got the money, so I have heard my mother say. Mother didn't live long after that. She used to look mighty sad. I've seen her cry sometimes. I guess may be that hurt her. I was a chap then, ten or twelve years old, but I remember that morning when he drove me off and knocked me in the head. It hurts me yet sometimes and things look mighty curious and bothersome from what they used to look.

Needham:

How came you at Nathan Brown's, Eph?

Eph:

I didn't have any place to stay and I met old Mr. Brown one day on the street and he told me to come up to his house. I went there and they jest told me to stav, and I stayed.

Needham:

They are good people, Eph, and are treating you kindly

Eph:

They are, for a fact. I've got to go now to help them about

the work, and it's getting mighty near dinner time, too (*Starts to go but sees handkerchief and flowers on desk*). Ha! ha! Mr. Squire, what's these here? Has Miss Nora been up here this morning?

Needham:

What makes you think so, Eph?

Eph:

Golly, I knows Miss Nora's handkerchief! See here, Mr. Squire, here's her name on it. And didn't I see her a getting these flowers this morning! I knowed something was in her head.

Needham:

Never mind that now. Here is a note that I want you to carry to Mr. Brown's.

Eph:

All right, I'll take a note to Miss Nora, too, if you want me to.

Needham:

O, go on, and carry the note to Mr. Brown. (*Exit Eph*). My God! Isn't this a revelation; that poor unfortunate out-cast, the nephew of Grab-all. His greed broke a mother's heart and then ruined her child. And his own kin! What villany! And now he poses in the garb of virtue! I will no longer be a party to his oppression! I will assert my manhood! In the name of humanity, I protest! And by the Gods, the wheel *shall* turn!

(*Exit Needham excitedly*).

ACT I; SCENE IV.

(*At Nathan Brown's house*).

(*Sheriff enters*).

Brown:

Why, how do you do, Sheriff Johuson; glad to see you. Have a seat.

Sheriff:

Thank you, I have but little time to spare. How are the olks?—all well I suppose.

Brown:

Oh, yes, well as common; nothing to complain of on that score, except Mary is not so spry and strong lately as she might be; she will work herself to death taking in sewing and washing.

Sheriff:

I wouldn't allow her to do it, Brown.

Brown:

Well don't I protest, and fuss abut it, and cut up the very old Harry? But nothing can stop her, she is doing this to keep Julius at school; you know that boy is her pet, and she wants to make an educated gentleman out of Julius. I tell her she is working herself to death, that she is getting old before the time, furrows are coming into her dear face, but she thinks of her absent boy, and goes right on bearing her burden as if it were light as a feather, singing as cheerfully as that bird in the tree. Why, you would think, to see her, that not a care ever came into her sweet life.

Sheriff:

She is a noble wife, Brown, and it means more than we men think to have such wives to help us poor fellows.

Brown:

Yes, she is a daisy darling, Sheriff; but she is not at home to-day, she took Nora and went over to Squire Needham's mother to do some sewing; that Needham family are mighty nice, clever folks, sheriff, Mary don't tell me, but I catch on to things now and then; she takes Nora with her to old Mrs. Needham's, who is giving her lessons on the piano. You know Mary is mighty much stuck on the idea of educating the children: she is banking considerably on our daughter, Nora, as well as on Julius.

Sheriff:

Your daughter is very intelligent and beautiful, Brown, and she ought to have all the advantages possible; she is fitted to shine some day as a star in society.

Brown:

But, Sheriff, she is simply the daughter of poor old Nathan Brown, the robber, and this will keep her always in the background.

Sheriff:

No, Brown, that doesn't follow; but then I had almost forgot—I have come to serve some papers on you for Deacon Grab-all. He says he has a bill-of-sale on your cows, the horse, hogs, etc., and he has brought suit to get possession.

Brown:

Well, Sheriff it is a fact, I did sign the document and I guess the Deacon has the legal claim on the whole thing, and if he presses his claim and takes the property I can't help it, but I am a little surprised at the young Squire who got me to sign the paper.

Sheriff:

But, Brown, you can't blame the Squire; you know he is Deacon Grab-all's lawyer and has to do whatever the old deacon says or lose his job.

Brown:

Yes, yes, I see, that is all right I reckon, but I would hate to have to make my living a lawing for other folks, and yet Mary says our Julius is going to make a lawyer too, maybe so, but—well, let it go.

Sheriff:

Brown, lawyers are not so bad as some folks imagine, and when I tell you a secret it will change your opinion of lawyers. Squire Needham is your friend, and here is his fine gold watch and chain he left with me to get you the money to redeem your property. (*With tears and considerable emotion Brown replies*).

Brown:

But, Sheriff, this is not right in the Squire. I can't accept his kind offer; in the first place, I cannot tell when I can ever repay him, and I might as well owe the Deacon as the Squire; and then if the Deacon should find out that the Squire was befriending me this way he would go back on him and take his business from him. No, no, Sheriff, I must not do this.

Sheriff:

But, Brown, you must accept this; the matter is all arranged; I hold the watch and advance the money myself, go and pay the

Deacon and get your property released, how fortunate you are; and your wife don't know about this either.

Brown:

Yes, yes, it does look like a mighty curious piece of good fortune; it would have nearly killed Mary to have to give up our property, especially the cow, she is making us half our living; that old Jersey cow pays our rent and wood bill, Sheriff. If we had to give her up we would have to send for Julius sure enough to come home and go to work, and this would sure break Mary's heart.

Sheriff:

Yes, Brown, you ought to feel grateful to the Squire, he wants to see you come out all right.

Brown:

I guess I do feel mighty grateful, Sheriff, and for Mary's sake especially: she is a great girl, that wife is, she is always talking about signs and says a providential finger is in the business. I guess she would say the whole providential hand was in this affair; but I will go at once and settle with the Deacon and get back before Mary comes home.

(Exit Brown and the Sheriff).

ACT I; SCENE V.

(Squire Needham's office. Deacon G. and the Squire engaged in conversation. Knock on the door).

Needham:

Come in.

(Brown and the Sheriff enter)

Brown:

I hope I am not intruding gentlemen, I will retire until you and the Deacon are through. I went to the Deacon's office and the clerk said probably I should find him here.

Needham:

Be seated. The Deacon and I are not so engaged that we can't postpone our matter for a short time; in fact we were discussing that little affair between him and you.

Brown:

Well, Deacon, I have come to make you as glad perhaps, as I

ain—I have come to pay you that debt. (*Offers him the money*). I have not been unmindful of this obligation, but I have been unable to pay you until this very day.

Deacon G:

You don't owe me anything, Mr. Brown, you settled that debt by a bill-of-sale of your property; I took this in lieu of the debt and have given orders to my attorney here to have the property turned over by the Sheriff to me.

Brown:

But, Deacon, to be sure I did give you a bill-of-sale and I thought this was simply to be further security for the debt. You know I have never failed to pay up the interest, and in advance, and I never counted on this, only as security.

Deacon G:

But, Mr. Brown, you ought to know better than that; you are aware that I already held a mortgage and why should I want further security, when I had this chattel mortgage? What sense would there be in my going to the expense of hiring a lawyer to draw up these last papers, when I had ample security; it was simply a bargain and sale to me, of your property.

Sheriff:

But, Deacon, the property is worth considerably more than seventy-five dollars, and you would be the last man to claim more than was right.

Deacon G:

Mr. Sheriff, you are neither judge, jury nor lawyer in this transaction and will please observe that I have not sought any advice from you.

Sheriff:

Certainly sir, I understand; I was simply making a suggestion. I thought you would consider yourself very fortunate to get the seventy-five dollars and would not desire to take Brown's property.

Deacon G:

I need no suggestions, sir. You are simply the Sheriff and are bound by the mandate of the court and I suppose you have been ordered to take and hold the goods and chattels of Brown,

subject to law, and if you have disregarded this order of the court there is a way to deal with officers who are thus derelict in their duty. I can have you ruled for misfeasance in office.

Sheriff :

I am at your mercy, Mr. Grab-all, but I will risk the consequences of your proceeding to have me ruled.

Deacon G :

Squire Needham, how is this? Did you not bring the suit to recover my property? Are not those cows, hogs, the horse, etc., my property by virtue of this bill-of-sale?

Needham :

Yes, in one sense; but, I think, Deacon, you should accept the seventy-five dollars Brown tenders you, it is payment in full of all demands you hold against him.;

Deacon G :

But, that is ~~s~~quibbling, Squire. Tell me if I am not the legal and sole owner of this property described in the bill-of-sale, and if so, have I not the right to take possession of my own? Answer me as a lawyer, not as a moralizer.

Needham :

Well, Deacon, your refusing to accept this tender of the money places you at a great disadvantage and under the circumstances, you are wrong. This bill-of-sale would be treated by the court as a mortgage and foreclosure proceedings would be necessary.

Deacon G :

Then, sir, you deceived me. You drew up the papers yourself, you led me to believe differently; you are wilfully or helplessly ignorant; you have not respected the relations between client and attorney. I am surprised, I am shocked sir, at your conduct.

Needham :

Mr. Grab-all, I have fully appreciated the relation existing between client and attorney, and I have arranged to get you your money; this is all any lawyer could do or any client should demand.

Deacon G :

Well, you can do as you please as my lawyer about accepting

the seventy-five dollars, but I will not personally do it; then remember I shall not pay one cent of cost connected with this case nor a dime for attorney's fees. I will see you again about this and other matters

(Exits Deacon angry).

Needham:

Well, Brown, here is a receipt in full for the seventy-five dollars. *(Hands him receipt).* The Deacon will soon get over this, he is dyspeptic, you know, and gets off his base sometimes, but he will be all smiles next Sunday at church

Sheriff:

Yes, his is a case of *pecuniary* dyspepsia, affects his heart instead of his liver. He is the hardest, knottiest old cuss I ever saw, and when he dies the last thing he will ever behold will be a vision of mortgages and bank-bills and the last thing he will hear will be the jingling of the almighty dollar.

Brown:

No, no, Squire, I did owe him the money and when he loaned it to me it was a mighty great accommodation too. That was nearly two years ago and I promised to pay him in six or nine months; so you see he has been very obliging, and if he had taken my property I would not have grumbled, but only felt bad for Mary's sake. You know Mary is dead bent on keeping Julius at school; but these are awful times Squire, and we poor people are the veriest slaves. You lawyers and merchants and speculators don't know how we fellows are put to it, keeping the wolf from the door; but I am not complaining. I am only thinking how strange it is to see things like they are.

Needham:

But, Brown, you are all right now with the Deacon, the debt is paid and it maybe, that things will change for the better before long. I admit that we are living in the midst of terrible times, but then we are living in free America. The doctrines of individual sovereignty, equal rights to all, special favors to none, are becoming crystalized ideas in the minds of the masses; and this shall be the almighty idea to nerve the hearts of the common people, before they shall be utterly dominated by this would-be money tyranny, more damnable than any slavery that ever

cursed the earth.

Brown:

Why, Squire, you don't talk like a lawyer or politician, you talk like one of our sort, I mean we common laboring people; but I love to hear you talk this way, Squire, and did you know it the common people are beginning to think for themselves, as they never did before. They are being educated on these subjects; ten men are reading to-day where one was a few years ago. Yes Sir, the masses are being educated and intelligence is being widely diffused. Social, ecclesiastical, and political tyranny can only thrive where ignorance abounds. Let the people be educated. Let intelligence rule and soon we shall hear the prelude to the anthem of victory; we shall see the glint of the dawn; the coming of the sun that shall dispel the gloom; we shall hear the voice of American freedom like the voice of the Seven Thunders. This sound of aroused America shall be like the trumpet that shall awake the dead; but, ha; ha; ha! I was about to forget the old Deacon and his seventy-five dollars. Here is a toast to all men, and the Deacon in particular, on the platform of the common brotherhood of humanity, I will see you again to-morrow, gentlemen

END OF ACT FIRST.

Act Two, Scene One.

(Deacon Grab-all's parlor, where he, Squire Needham, and Col. Goldsmith discuss the strike. Tilly Maloy, an Irish servant, seated at the piano, as Maggie, the Deacon's daughter, enters).

Maggie:

Tilly Maloy, what on earth are you doing; I have been ringing for you for the last five minutes!

Tilly:

Indade, Mum, and I never heard a sound!

Maggie:

If you had been attending to your duties as a servant, you would have heard me.

Tilly:

I beg your pardon, Mum. I was jist thrying to act the leddy a little while, to see how it would fale.

Maggie:

I have a note from papa; he will be here this evening with some gentlemen friends and he wants a luncheon prepared. Have the cigars ready, and also that last case of wine he sent up.

Tilly:

Thin, I suppose the Person wont be after being here wid all that wine in sight?

Maggie:

Col. Goldsmith and Squire Needham will be here.

Tilly:

And I'll warrant that they're coming to plot against the poor, hard-working men, who can't git enough wages to buy bread for their chilluns.

Maggie:

Tilly, you must not speak so; you do not think that they mean the workingmen any harm, do you?

Tilly:

And sure I don't if keeping the poor strikers from earning a decent living is no harm!

Maggie:

Is your husband one of the strikers?

Tilly:

And faith, you know he has been working for your father in the factory, and it's nothing to be ashamed of, I'm sure to be an honest workingman. I know a chap that you'd loike to be your man some day, that don't belong to these rich, stuck-up quality folks, aither.

Maggie:

Why, Tilly, what do you mean?

Tilly:

And sure I mean that Julius Brown, and a dacent fellow he is, too; you may be fooling your old daddy, but you ain't a foolin, me. Oive seen Julius snaiking up behind the garden loike a thafe, and a getting them bits of paper that you'd put there when no one was a seeing you! I knose how it is; 'taint been long since I've been a gal mesilf.

Maggie:

Hush, hush, I hear papa and the gentlemen coming now.

(Exit Maggie).

Tilly:

And sure enough, there's the villians, mating to plot against the poor men and me own Pat. The divil take the whole crew of them!

(Exit Tilly). (Enter Deacon Grab-all, Squire Needham, and Col. Goldsmith)

Deacon G:

Walk in, gentlemen. and be seated.

Col. Goldsmith and Squire Needham:

Thank you, with pleasure.

Deacon G:

Excuse me for a moment. *(Exits and immediately returns with cigars).* Before we get down to serious business suppose we enjoy the aroma of a delicious Havana?

Goldsmith:

Nothing more acceptable, I think it a good prelude. *(Smoke)*

Deacon G:

Well, gentlemen, we are confronted with a serious problem in this matter of the strike among our workingmen; and right now, on the eve of the election we cannot afford to ignore the necessity of wise and immediate measures. I should like to have you, Col. Goldsmith, express your views upon the situation.

Goldsmith:

Then, first, I should say in regard to the strike now on, we should not show any signs of weakening or yielding to this howling mob; the more we yield, the more they howl. We must conquer them by starvation. They cannot hold out against hunger and will come back whining and fawning like whipped curs.

Deacon G:

Well, Colonel, I am not able to discuss this question, not having been blessed with any great amount of education; but I believe that your ideas concerning the situation are about right, although it may not be policy for us to carry them out just at this time, on account of the election so near at hand; but here is our friend, Squire Needham, who is not only a student of Blackstone, but of everything else; I suggest that we hear from him.

Goldsmith:

Yes, I readily yield to Squire Needham, I know that he is a student of the masters, Huxley, John Stuart, Mill, Ricardo, Adam Smith & Co. I believe Mr. Needham took the university prize on the subject of political economy.

Needham:

Well then, gentlemen, to begin with, I think you are too severe in your criticisms of the strikers. There are some true and deserving men among the strikers, and it is pitiful to see so much distress occasioned, it may be, by the unwise enthusiastic leaders. Don't you think we might meet these strikers with the weapons of argument, persuasion and advice, and get their ear? We might accomplish more than we think.

Goldsmith:

Ah, Needham, I see that you entirely mistake these people. They have *inherited* their hatred and prejudice. They belong to that class who are born with base propensities and are incapable of development. They demonstrate the law of heredity, the

transmission of qualities of mind antagonistic to the law of progress.

Needham:

I most emphatically dissent from your views, Colonel. There never was a more unjust and hurtful fallacy than the proposition advanced by you, that the law of heredity accounts for individual and racial distinctions, that there is a born aristocratic, dominant class who are the ordained masters; and that there is a born subservant class who are to wallow in the mire and lick the dust from the patrician's feet. All men are men, made by the same maker, out of the same material, in the same moulds. There is more material and bigger moulds in some than in others, to be sure, but this difference we see among men can be more rationally accounted for than on the theory of heredity. These unhappy, uncultured wretches who are to-day striving and seeking for mere bread, are so by virtue of their surroundings, their environments. They have been cowed and cursed and crowded out until all their self-assertion is well nigh crushed out of them. Give these poor wretches the same advantages their more favored brethren enjoy, for the next generation or two, and see where and how they shall stand. Take the children of these poor laborers, place them amidst the refining, developing surroundings you enjoy, take your children and force them to endure the purgatorial existence of these despised hirelings, and when forty years have passed you may witness a repetition of this same scene, ^{near to} ~~this~~ night, only reversed; your children's children will be protesting against, it may be, fancied wrongs, and their children will be despising and dismissing the unrecognized demands of the cowed, crushed curs, **as you call them.**

Goldsmith:

Needham, you are a socialist, if not an anarchist. Such views as you have expressed, promulgated, would kindle the fires of a revolution in this country. You, sir, are strangely out of sympathy with the higher views of our civilization.

Needham:

But, Colonel, our civilization is strangely out of sympathy with the higher view of justice and fraternal fellowship. Over eighteen hundred years ago the mighty teacher of Nazareth promulgated this hateful doctrine of socialism as you term it. He laid down the law of human progress along the line of human

brotherhood. This philosophy was as repugnant to the aristocratic class in his day as it is to this same class in our day. The boastful, arrogant pharisee believed in the doctrine of heredity, and gloried in being the children of Abraham. They scorned the carpenter of Nazareth and saw the taint of vulgarity in his line of conduct. But he rose above their foremost teachers, and with a logic as consuming as lightning he scattered into atoms their false egotistical philosophy. Beneath their massive, rotten creed, that had evolved out of their gross misconception of human relationship, and crystalized into a mighty hypocrisy he placed the bomb of truth, and destroyed the colossal fabric forever.

Goldsmith:

But, Squire, you are an enthusiast; crazy; you are not an advocate of dynamite-bomb throwing are you?

Needham:

No, Sir, not in that sense, but history repeats itself, and this nineteenth century is repeating itself in geometric ratio, and we may be nearer than we dream to a revolution, not of fire, sword or dynamite, but a revolution of ideas born of a desire for human freedom.

Deacon G:

Well, gentlemen, we have drifted from the subject. I move we turn to the subject of the strike now on hand, and see if something can't be done. Business is stopped. Stagnation has set in; stagnation is death. I suggest that we deputize Squire Needham a committee of one to confer with the strikers and see if we can not agree upon terms.

Goldsmith:

If Needham should harangue that crowd of strikers as he has us here to-night, he would raise the very devil, and things would be in a far worse condition than at present.

Deacon G:

I think we can risk sending Needham; if they will listen to anybody it will be Needham. Remember, too, that the election is near at hand and we need these fellows' votes.

Goldsmith:

Ha; ha; Deacon, I see you are getting apprehensive about being elected to the Legislature. I think you are safe. Do you

think we are going to be beaten by this crowd? They have no money, no brains, nothing but gas. Their windy speakers are trying to stir up a revolt but we can drive them like a flock of sheep.

Deacon G:

But, Colonel, you may be mistaken, these people are growing mighty independent, and are tired of being whipped into line. They are reading and thinking for themselves as never before.

Goldsmith:

Oh, yes, they are prateing and squeaking about monopolies combines, trusts, free trade, tariff, and so on, and they know about as much on these subjects as the Deacon here does about church matters.

Deacon G:

You should not bring personal matters in this discussion. I confess that I am not an ecclesiastical expert, but the preachers stand by me and this is a mighty solid backing in an emergency. It requires a little pecuniary grease to keep Zion's wheels running, as well as everything else, and the parson must have his bread buttered. But to business. I insist on Squire Needham going to confer with the strikers.

Needham:

Well gentlemen, if I accept this mission what instructions do you furnish me? What definite proposals do you submit to these people? I must carry proposals that show fairness and sincerity. Suppose Deacon, you draft the proposition for a settlement.

Deacon G:

All right, Squire, here is what we submit. (*Reads from a paper*).

TERMS:—It is hereby agreed to restore the ten per cent reduction of wages and to insure steady work for the next six months, provided the workmen shall agree to the ten hour system for the remainder of the year.

GOLDSMITH, GRAB-ALL & Co.

You see we restore the ten per cent reduction provided the men return immediately to work, and under the ten hour system, and provided they agree to bind themselves during the remainder of the year.

Needham:

Then gentlemen, if this is agreeable, I shall go at once and see the leader of the strikers and try to arrange matters satisfactorily. Shall I report here?

Deacon G:

Yes, we will wait here for the result of your conference. Who is the leader of this present strike, Squire?

Needham:

I don't know that he is the instigator, but he is the chief spirit among them and they abide his decision; I mean Nathan Brown.

Deacon G:

That old cuss will never agree to anything I propose; but then you can try it.

(Exit the Squire)

Goldsmith:

Grab-all, that fellow Needham is a dangerous fellow; he is shrewd and cunning, and I suspect his loyalty. He is in sympathy with these blatant strikers. I think we ought to elect another attorney for our company.

Deacon G:

I think you do the Squire injustice Colonel, he is not cunning or disloyal; the fact is he is too confounded loyal and honest, that is what is the matter; he is a straight-forward, true fellow, but withall a fool in one sense. He will work for these people without fee or reward; defend them in the courts for nothing, help them out of their troubles, and all for a "thank you." But he is terribly popular, and I wouldn't be surprised Colonel, if they put him up against you for congress. *(Sound of a bell in the dining-hall)*. There Colonel, I hear a welcome sound, let's repair to the dining hall and partake of some refreshments; we can there discuss further the question over our wine, and by the time we have digested the viands as well as the subject the Squire will return and report

Goldsmith:

All right, Deacon, a little replenishing of the inner man, will not be objectionable. Does the parson like your wine?

Deacon G:

He only takes it in Homeopathic doses, and for his stomach's

sake, and other infirmities.

(They retire)

ACT II; SCENE II.

(At Nathan Brown's house. Brown and family, with friends, discussing the strike).

Foreman:

But, Mr. Brown, the men are very much aroused by this last reduction of their wages. Some of them have actually made threats against the property of Deacon Grab-all and Col. Goldsmith.

Brown:

That is all wrong. We must not resort to brute force. We are not anarchists, we must carry our point by an appeal to reason, to conscience, and not resort to physical means.

Foreman:

How long do you expect a set of starving men, are going to wait? I tell you, they are right now ready to do some terrible work and I can't blame them much, and you need not be surprised if some of the unruly ones carry out their threats, and it may be this very night.

(Knock on the door).

Brown, to his daughter:

Admit who ever that is at the door.

(Enter Squire Needham.)

Why, how do you do, Squire, glad to see you, come right in and be at home among us, I believe you are acquainted with everybody.

Needham:

Oh, yes, thank you, but I have not long to remain, I have come on a special mission, in fact I have been appointed a committee of one to confer with you about the strike.

Brown:

Do you come from Grab-all, Goldsmith & Co?

Needham:

Yes, directly from them, and with a definite proposition, and I think we can arrange matters satisfactorily.

Brown:

Well, Squire, I can speak for the men, and say that they will acced to any proposition that is fair, that will enable them to make an honest living. If these capitalists just understood us there would be no trouble. Of course we want terms just and honorable. What terms do you propose, Squire?

(He reads the terms).

Brown:

I believe the men will agree to these terms. I will send them word. The foreman here of the factory crowd can go and tell the men we have agreed upon terms, and that all hands shall go to work in the morning.

Foreman:

Yes sir. I will not be slow to spread the news, and I think everything will be all right if we can just control two or three of the worst ones.

(Exit Foreman).

Needham:

Thank you, Mr. Brown, I shall be proud to repeat this to the gentlemen, who deputed me on this mission.

Madam Brown:

My husband is always ready to do what is right, and the men who selected him to be the head and adviser in this matter never did a wiser thing. I think the men ought to accept the proposition and be thankful too. These are terribly hard times, and we should not expect things to be as they used to be. By the way, I received a letter from Julius to-day, he says everybody is talking about hard times in Boston, and prophesying dark days ahead. But he seems cheerful enough, and actually wanted me to give him some definite information about the Deacon's pretty daughter. What do you think of that, Mr. Needham, for Julius?

Needham:

I think Julius has an eye for the beautiful, and has the Deacon's daughter in his eye. There is no telling what may happen some of these days. But I must be going and make my report.

(Exit Needham).

Brown:

That Needham is an awful clever fellow, Nora, your mother talks about Julius and the Deacon's gal; but let me tell you pet,

there is the chap for me, and he would make a bully son-in-law, old woman!

(Nora turns away blushing).

Madam B:

Why, Nathan, you ought to be ashamed. Nora is nothing but a child yet.

Brown:

How old were you, Mary, when you committed your destiny to the keeping of Nathan Brown, eh? Just a few months younger than our Nora here. I recall ^{the time} ~~just~~ when you rested in my bosom like a scared rabbit and told me you were mine henceforth and forever. Oh, old girl, those were happy old days, and their memory is sweet to me yet. But say, Mary, how is Nora getting on studying piano lessons up at old Mrs. Needham's.

Madam B:

Nathan, who told you Nora was taking lessons at Mrs. Needham's.

Nora:

Nobody told papa, mama, he is just trying to find out something; he is always guessing things, and nearly always misses too.

Brown:

Ha; ha; may-be-so, but not this time. You can't fool your old papa, Nora, you nor your dear mother either. You are a team. But I wish you would let me hear you sing. You and your mother sing for me.

Nora:

What kind of a song papa, do you want? Something sentimental wouldn't suit you papa, would it?

Madam B:

Nora, suppose you sing that song the Squire wrote for you.

Brown:

Ah, well the Squire wrote you a song did he? This is first rate, getting along bully; I think I wrote a song or two for Mary in days gone by. Didn't I Mary?

Madam B:

Yes, and we used to sing them together too when we would want to get sentimental. But this is not a sentimental song that

he wrote for Nora. It is a song for the poor workingmen. Now Nora, I will help you and we will sing it together. I think it is charming.

Nora:

But mama I can't sing before papa.

Brown:

Tut, tut, why I might join in the chorus myself, go ahead and let us have it.

(They sing the following).

THE LABOR SONG.

'Twas in my dreams I heard a song—
O, shall I hear it sung again?
It was a tale of grief and wrong—
The poor man's prayer and plaintive song,
And sung by broken-hearted men.

CHORUS.

But, Oh, ye weary sons of men,
Still hope and trust, and sing and pray;
We may not know the how or when,
But soon to you there'll come again,
A brighter, sweeter, gladsome day.

I saw them clasp each other's hand;
I heard their oath, their pledge and prayer,
That for each other they would stand,
Be true to home and native land,
And one another's sorrows share. CHORUS.

For faithful wives and mothers dear;
For hungry babes, they sung their prayer:
There trembled in each eye a tear—
O, God, how pitiful to hear—
This echo of their deep despair. CHORUS.

My dream was ended, still I slept
And heard the echo of that song,
And saw these brave men as they wept
Repeating vows that they had kept
To help to right the cruel wrong. CHORUS.

Oh, was this but a dream indeed?
I would to God 'twas nothing more
But all around is human need
And everywhere there's hearts that bleed,
God save the rich and help the poor. CHORUS.

*(As they sing the chorus at the conclusion, a cry of fire is heard—
alarm bells, great confusion, etc.)*

Brown,

"Run, run, the shops and factories are on fire, everything will be destroyed! My God! why could not the men have waited! Poor wretches, they, themselves will be the sufferers!"

(Enters in haste the Deacon, and the Squire, the Deacon shouting.)

Deacon Graball,

"I am a ruined man! All I have is being burned up; all my bonds; all my securites; everything I have on earth is yonder in that burning building. I am a pauper to night. The men would not listen to our proposals, now all is lost!"

Mrs. B.

Deacon Graball, it must be the work of some body else besides the poor strikers for my husband had forbidden them to do anything of the sort; it is some dastardly coward who has never made an honest living—what ought to be done with such people, any how. Oh, what dreadful times these are; but Deacon, there is a good Providence who rules everything for the best and I know you are a Christian man, and can find comfort in your religion."

Deacon G.

"Poor times now, Madam, to be getting comfort out of religion when, everything I've got in the world is being destroyed. What shall I do? Where is your husband?"

Mrs. B.

He has gone to the fire: He will try and save your property, I know he will get the men to help him."

Deacon Graball,

"But all is lost, —I am a pauper, —I see it now. No longer than to day my daughter told me she had a dream and saw all our property burn up and saw us poor and despised and begging bread, like tramps. What makes folks have dreams anyhow? I must go and see about my property. Good God! I am ruined, a pauper, a beggar."

Mrs. B.

Come, Nora, we will go and help,—this is dreadful; there comes the Squire. Nora, you go with him! I will look after Nathan; he might forget himself and go into the burning building and be killed.

Squire Needham,

This is dreadful, but we can't help it, it may be a just retribution.
There comes a crowd of men.

Nora:

How dreadful; but Mr. Needham, the poor starved working
men were driven to desperation. Heaven help us all.

(Curtain drops. end of scene and act 2nd.)

Act Third, Scene First.

(Deacon Graball's little cottage. He is poor, broken in spirit and in purse. Deacon reeling on a lounge,—enter Squire Needham.)
(Several years have passed.)

Deacon Graball:

“Why bless me, come in Squire, I did not know you at first, —please excuse me for not rising, I am quite ailing of late, —can hardly walk. Be seated,

Squire Needham:

Yes, Deacon, I am glad to see you. It has been several years since we met, and I should hardly have known you, but I hope you will soon get better,—I have never ceased to remember your great kindness in the past, and shall ever be grateful.

Deacon G:

Well, Squire, things are mighty different now from what they used to be, here I am a poor old forsaken man living on the charity of a friend. My surroundings are quite different now than when you used to see me, Squire

Squire Needham:

But Deacon, we all have our trials,—our ups and downs,—any how, you have the advantage of us poor sinners,—you are a good church man, and can find a consolation in your creed.

Deacon G:

We will not discuss that, Squire; but I can tell you the Christian's creed is all right provided his life tallys with his creed; but let me tell you, precious few live up to their creed. I am a Christian still, but not much on the creed business, It won't do. But Squire, I have paid for my cussedness,—if sorrow and suffering counts for anything, I have not only lost all my property,—and am a pauper as you see me but, I have lost all my happiness. My dear wife never recovered from the shock of the great fire, and died two weeks afterwards. My only daughter Maggie left home, God only knows where, and to day may be dead or living in shame and disgrace. Oh, Sir, I have drank to the bottom the dregs of life's bitter cup.

Squire Needham:

You must not feel so despondent and look on the dark side of life. While life lasts there is hope. I have come to tell you some

good news,—If you will hear it.

Deacon G:

Tell me some good news? Well lets hear it,—God knows I have not heard anything cheering in a long time. If you have anything of this character I will bless your coming, sure.

Squire Needham:

Well, I have a message from Mr. Nathan Brown, he desires you to come out West and spend your days with him.

Deacon G:

Nathan Brown! Why, where is he, and what is he doing? Tell me about the old codger?

Squire N:

Well, Sir, Brown is living out West in one of our flourishing cities, and doing an immense business. He is a wholesale boot and shoe merchant,—one of the largest leather manufacturers in the country.

Deacon G:

Still sticking to the leather business. Hurrah for Brown. But he will be a leather man.

Squire N:

And that Son Julius of his is my partner,—practicing law. He is attorney for one or two large corporations. He is making his mark, too.

Deacon G:

That always was a smart boy; but he inherits it from his mother. Do you know his mother came from mighty good stock. I used to clerk for her old daddy in Baltimore, She married old Brown out of pure spite and cussedness.

Squire N:

How was that, Deacon?

Deacon G:

Well Brown was a pretty good looking sort of a fellow, but a common cobbler, and one day she came to his shop to get him to make her a pair of shoes. She was still in her teens. Brown measured her foot and made her the shoes and somehow, from that, the thing started,—and there sprung up an affection between the two, Mary's parents raised Cain and the old man for-

bade Brown from even noticing his daughter on the streets. Any how they ran away and got married, Her parents never did forgive her, and the old man made his will and cut her off with a shilling.

Squire N:

But she stuck to him anyhow.

Deacon G:

Stuck to him! I should say she did, She is made of that kind of stuff,—she would have stuck to him if he had been as poor and trifling as a tramp. But Mary had one brother that never went back on her. He was an old bachelor lawyer in Boston. He was a downright good fellow too, and he it was who educated Mary's boy, Julius.

Squire N:

Deacon I see you still stick to the idea that there is much in blood,—that aristocratic idea of yours.

Deacon G:

And who don't? Blood will tell anywhere. There is much in a stock of folks as there is in a stock of horses. Take an old common plug dray horse, blanket him, pamper him, curry him, put him in a stall, lined with cotton and air tight, and he is the same old plug, a common old drag. Take a blooded Morgan, hitch him to a cart, put him in a rail pen for a stable, without a blanket, and yet he will curry his head and tail up, like a prince. It is in him,—born in him and you can't get it out, any more than you can put it in. So it is with folks,—blood will tell; and if it is not in them, you can't put it in them. Brown's wife was blooded stock,—and there is where his children get that spunk, and high headedness from.

Squire N:

But Deacon, I come by to see you especially for our old friend Nathan Brown. He desires most sincerely that you come out West and spend the rest of your life with him. He has succeeded in life,—worth several hundred thousand dollars,—and he wants you to come and share his success. Here is his letter, by the way

(Hands the Deacon a letter.)

Deacon G :

You read it Squire, my eyesight is bad, and I have not got my spectacles handy.

(Squire N: reads as follows.)

My dear Deacon ;--Mr. Needham goes East on a business trip and will stop over on his way to see you. I send this to you by him. I would be glad if you would arrange to come and see me. I have a big surprise for you when you come. I will not tell it yet, I want to give you a happy surprise. Please arrange and come as soon as possible, Mary is anxious to see you too. Let me know when you can come. Yours &c., Nathan Brown.

P. S. Enclosed is a check for \$25.

Deacon G :

Don't this beat anything you ever heard of. Why Squire, I am going to see Brown anyhow, for Mary's sake. I will start next week.

Squire N :

All-right, Deacon, I am glad you are. I will be back by that time, and you will have a royal welcome I know. I must bid you good bye as my train leaves in half an hour.

(They shake hands.) Well, Deacon, I will see you again soon.

Deacon G :

Yes if nothing happens. Good-bye,. I will write to Brown to day. I will go right now with you to the Post Office and mail him a letter.

(Exit both.)

ACT III; SCENE II.

(On the street, Deacon Graball looking for the business place of Nathan Brown.)

Deacon G :

I ought to have telegraphed Brown what train I was coming on so he would have met me at the depot. But I guess I can find his place of business. Gracious, this is a pretty big town, and if Brown is one of the big merchants in such a place as this, he must have made a big success! But it is that wife of his I'll warrant.

(As he is going along, Brown and the Deacon meet.)

Brown.

Well, well, Deacon, how are you? When did you come? Why

didn't you telegraph what train? Julius went to the West-bound train this morning to meet you, but he said you never came on that. But anyhow, I am glad to see you Deacon, and many times welcome you are to my home.

Deacon G:

Why Brown, I should never have known you in the world, you have changed mightily,—actually look younger than you did five or ten years ago. I guess I look a score of years older.

Brown:

No, Deacon, I recognized you a block away up the street,—you look like you did in the olden time,—a little broken but about the same.

Deacon G:

Ah, no, Brown, I am not the same as when you knew me: I am all broken up. I am a poor, desolate, old man. But then, I suppose it is all right. I am not half so bad off as thousands of poor men who are better than I am. Brown, do you know that nothing is truer than the old doctrine; I treated my poor men wrong,—I am reaping the consequence but I must not complain.

Brown:

Oh, well, Deacon, that is all in the past,—you are here now, and we will see better days. Mary and the rest of the family are at home waiting to welcome you, I promise a surprise for you,—just wait until we get home and if I don't fulfill my promise you can take my whole business, lock, stock, and barrel and make leather out of my old hide. We will take this cable car and go and see Mary and the rest of the family. Come this way; the car goes in half a block of my house.

(Exit both arm in arm.)

ACT III; SCENE III.

(At Brown's house; enter Brown and the Deacon.)

Madam B:

Why, Deacon, how glad we all are to see you. What a lot of things we will have to talk about.

Deacon:

Yes, and it will take a year to tell half the story.

(Enters the Deacon's lost daughter, followed by Julius.)

Maggie:

O, here is Papa, my dear Papa.

(Hugs and kisses him.)

Deacon Graball:

What is all this? Is this you, Maggie? Heaven be praised, —how is it? Am I dreaming? Is it you Maggie, sure enough?

(Caresses his daughter.)

Maggie:

Yes, Papa, it is me, and this is you, dear Papa. How glad I am to see you! Papa, this is my husband, —this is Julius. You know Julius, don't you?

Deacon G:

Brown, is this all real? Am I not dreaming? Here are these children, Maggie and Julius. Well how comes it so. I won't stop now to ask but it is so much like a dream. No it is real.

Brown:

I told you I had a surprise for you Deacon, Haven't I fulfilled my promise? I may have another surprise before I am done.

Deacon G:

Well, I am prepared now for anything, I feel like I am walking in my sleep

Madam Brown:

Maggie, where is the baby? Bring that out, here is a new Grand Pa.

(Deacon Graball looking amazed and startled.)

Maggie:

Yes, I forgot the little darling.

(Go and gets the baby.) Here papa, here is our little sweet, what do you think of it.

(Deacon G. takes baby.)

Deacon G:

Maggie, is it a boy or a girl? I can't tell at this stage of the game.

Maggie:

It is a girl, Papa, and just like Mama. Julius wanted a boy but I wanted a girl just like this one, —just like dear Mama.

Julius:

Now Maggie I never said I wanted a boy, I wanted a girl who would look like her mother, Ha: ha:

Deacon G:

What is the name of the youngster?

Maggie:

We named her for Mama, call her Alice and see if she don't know her name.

(The Deacon does not call the name, but with a tear and a sigh says to Maggie.)

Deacon G:

No Maggie I can't call that name yet, wait one of these days, when I get used to all these strange happenings. It is too much now, let me kiss the darling, and then,—but we will wait. Brown, this is too much joy for me all at once. Heaven be praised for it all.

Brown:

I have arranged for this and we are to have a celebration. I have ordered the refreshments, and the music, and we will duly celebrate this joyous occasion. Here comes the Squire, Deacon, and my daughter Nora,—his wife.

(Deacon and Squire greet each other.)

Squire N:

How do you do, Deacon, and a joyous welcome to our home. Here is my wife Mrs. Needham, formerly Miss Nora Brown. You perhaps have not forgotten her.

Deacon G:

Well, well, isn't this passing strange! Miss Nora, you and the Squire married, too, like Julius and Maggie? Ha: ha: where is your baby? Is it a boy or a girl?

Brown:

Deacon, you are too previous,—don't you see how they are blushing? They are still enjoying the honeymoon,—just got back from their bridal tour, but then, you are very natural in your surmises. But we must have the celebration. Maggie you and Nora bring in the refreshments.—bring in that wine for the Deacon. This the kind of wine he used to have in the olden times. You boys can drink water; you know you are temperance folks here; but the Deacon and I for old times sake will take a little of the stronger element.

(The ladies bring in the wine and cake.)

Squire Needham:

Well, Deacon, you didn't think that things would turn out this way, when I used to be your attorney in old Alabama?

Deacon G :

No, but who can tell what is going to happen? Squire, I always did know you would come out all right. Any how I had to bank on you, if you did now and then go back on me. But it is all right: and to night I am proud to be here, and thank a kind Heaven for bringing things around this way.

Brown :

Now Deacon, we are going to have a song and a dance in honor of this event, if your religious objection will not forbid. What say you?

Deacon G :

I am for a song or a dance, or anything else. This is more religion than I've enjoyed for twenty-five years. Yes, bring on the music, and let us have a good time in honor of this grand occasion.

(Music begins, first a dance,—an old fashion cotillion,—then a song with a dance concludes the performance.)

THE SONG.

1.

"We meet to night,—our hearts are light,
To fill the hours with pleasure;
Let cares take wing, —now while we sing,
And step to music's measure.

2.

Then here's good cheer,—but not a tear,
Of vain regret or sorrow.
May hearts beat light and eyes be bright,
In looking for the morrow.

3.

Here's to our joy, without alloy,—
And not one dream of sadness;
We'll spend the time with measured rhyme,
And to a song of gladness.

4.

Then let's forget each wild regret
And bury all our sorrows;
May hearts beat light and eyes be bright
In looking for the morrow.

THE END.



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